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THE

Commonweal

Dictators and Dictatorships

Was 'Fascism' an Episode?

by John A. Lukacs

The Bare Minimum

by Ted Le Berthon

AS PETRARCH COMING: A POEM . . by Raymond Roseliep
MARITAIN ON AMERICA . . . . . by Anne Fremantle
EDUCATION TODAY . . . . . by Philip Scharper
THE SANDBURG RANGE . . . . . by John Cournos

'olume LXVII, No. 24 March 14, 1958 Twenty-Five Cent

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A Point of View

Editors, contributors and readers alike appear to agree that what is most significant and important about The Commonweal is that it is an embodiment of a point of view. It is a conclusion reflected in quotations from, and references to, The Commonweal in various metropolitan newspapers and other mass media.

This viewpoint is most clearly manifest in The Commonweal's editorials each week on events and public issues. It also is developed, less directly perhaps, in a variety of articles on many subjects — social, cultural and political — by such typical contributors as: Horace Gregory, Christopher Dawson, H. A. Reinhold, Bede Griffiths, Francis E. McMahon, Donald Barr, Bette Richart and J. N. Moody.

The Commonweal's approach is perhaps one further degree less obvious in its many literary articles and reviews of current books, movies and plays. But it is also implicit there. The magazine's varied content week by week adds up to an integral whole.

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THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

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Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Orange, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879. Published weekly and printed in the U. S. A. by the Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N.Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685.

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U. S. and Canada, $8 a year. Foreign, $10. Single copies 25¢

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

REGULATING THE REGULATORS

THE MURKY atmosphere which has clouded Congressional investigation of the Federal regulatory agencies has not yet been completely dissipated, but it has cleared enough to allow the important questions to be asked. There is still, admittedly, a great deal of confusion, ignorance and political partisanship to be overcome, but the glare of public attention will make it difficult to avoid fuller investigation and to state definite recommendations.

Considerable attention is still given to the charges which Dr. Bernard Schwartz brought against Mr. Richard H. Mack, a member of the Federal Communications Commission. Although Dr. Schwartz was relieved of his duties as counsel to the Congressional subcommittee which is conducting the investigation, his methods—which were, to say the least, unorthodox and extra-legal—ensured widespread attention. And when Mr. Mack testified to his social and financial relations with influential lawyer Mr. Thurman Whiteside and denied any improper influence, the testimony was dutifully and fully reported. And other prominent figures who were interested, if only tangentially, in F.C.C. decisions suddenly found it desirable to explain their roles.

Since the investigation has already made clear that personal influence plays a large part in the presentation of petitions to the F.C.C., Representative Morgan Moulder, who resigned as chairman of the investigating subcommittee, has demanded that Dr. Schwartz be rehired. And just as Republican spokesmen hastened to point out that Mr. Mack, though an Eisenhower appointee, is a Democrat, there was a large scale debate about whether President Eisenhower should remove Mr. Mack or wait for his resignation.

In all the controversy about whether influence was bought, whether political considerations were of real importance, whether the "influence-peddling" had spread through official inner circles, whether the President had power to remove those he appointed—in all of this the aim of the investigating committee seemed, at first, in danger of being overwhelmed. The aim, according to Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn, was "to see whether or not the law as we intended it is being carried out or whether a great many of these laws are being repealed or revamped by those who administer them."

ALTHOUGH Mr. Mack resigned and further investigation may show that undue pressure was normal and pervasive, the greatest benefit of the investigation may well be that it has directed attention to those who are most qualified to bear witness in these matters, the lawyers who handle cases before the regulatory agencies. In an informal survey, according to the N.Y. *Times*, these lawyers are less distressed about the specific problems that have gained headlines than they are about the entire system of supposed regulation. All of the lawyers interested rejected the procedures of the F.C.C. and strongly criticized the other agencies.

Examples of abuses, which come from lawyers who won as well as from those who lost cases, are impressive and dispiriting. The procedures are both extremely expensive and time-consuming, often taking up to five years before a decision is reached. The initial hearings are held before F.C.C. examiners who are sometimes unnecessarily concerned about details and fine points. But the final decision is then left up to the F.C.C. commissioners, who rarely read the examiners' records and frequently disregard their recommendations.

Opinions about the declared criteria of the F.C.C.

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vary, but there was no disagreement that the application of the criteria was largely irresponsible. On one day, for example, the opinions given for two different decisions flatly contradicted each other. Some of the lawyers also pointed out that there are sometimes two or three applicants equally qualified for a desired channel. In such instances, they say, political decisions are inevitable.

These are the considerations that are of fundamental importance. If the system is as hopeless as these lawyers suggest, not even the best intentions will make it operate successfully. The present Congressional investigating subcommittee must turn from personalities to these major questions before it can successfully complete its task.

NEED FOR DOCTORS

THE DISPUTE over America's need for more doctors—now and in the future—goes on apace. A survey conducted by the New York *Times* shows that in the United States right now the demand for medical services far exceeds the supply, and the gap between supply and demand grows wider with every passing year. Even the present ratio of doctors to general population—one active physician to every 850 of the population—will fall markedly in the next decade or two unless our doctor-training facilities are hugely expanded in the very near future.

The American Medical Association rejects all this, of course. To the A.M.A., apparently, an oversupply of doctors, with possible unpleasant effects on the economic well-being of its members, is the one great evil, to be avoided at all costs. From this fundamental position the A.M.A. goes on to explain away all the bothersome facts and figures offered by its critics.

The A.M.A. says that doctor shortages are local and could be solved by "re-locating" the available supply of physicians. It remains unclear how such relocation—moving doctors from their practices in urban New York to rural Mississippi, say—could be accomplished. The A.M.A. insists that wonder drugs and improved techniques make past, present and future physician-population ratios meaningless.

In every case, and with whatever explanation, the A.M.A. consistently opposes or refuses to cooperate with efforts to increase substantially the number of doctors in training. Even suggestions that the United States might need more doctors at some time in the future are taken by the doctors as personal attacks, to be met by violent and sweeping denial. Such a suggestion, by Lawrence Bloomgarden, in an article published in The Commonweal some months ago, provoked from our doctor-readers a barrage of angry letters, filled with assorted accusations of "socialism" and "un-Americanism."

More and more, the medical educators and the population experts are testifying that the nation needs to build many more medical schools and to graduate thousands more doctors every year—even to maintain the present disputed level of medical care. How long can the A.M.A. hold out?

WORLDWIDE EFFECTS

TO THE ANXIETY over increasing unemployment in this country must be added concern over the effects of slackened American business activity upon other national economies. Even the damage that has resulted so far involves a disquieting chain effect. First to be hard hit were the foreign suppliers of raw materials for declining American industries. Such producing countries have become in turn less able to import finished products, and there is thus less foreign demand for our own manufactures and for those of Europe and Japan. Concern has also been growing in Latin America.

While the comparatively prosperous West European economies have held up fairly well to date despite growing apprehension, weaker economies, notably that of Japan, have begun to buckle. Because of declining sales in troubled Indonesia and throughout Southeast Asia, the Japanese textile industry finds that it has greatly overproduced. Lay-offs, shut-downs and bankruptcies are sharply increasing; the government has decreed a thirty per cent cut in textile output. Steel production has also been cut by twenty per cent. The crisis there is approaching major proportions, with the stability of our strongest ally in the Far East at stake. A resumption of American stockpiling of strategic materials for trade's sake is already being suggested, and no doubt emergency measures to aid Japan directly will have to be called upon before any appreciable impact of the awaited American upturn can take effect. With many smaller economies in the world heavily dependent upon our own, the United States has less leeway for attempting to muddle through to a resumption of forward momentum. Obviously we cannot allow the economies of any friends and allies to go down.

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THE UNORGANIZED ORGANIZERS

WE HAVE never felt that public relations was one of labor's strong points. Now labor's handling of the attempt by some of its organizers to form their own union and the dismissal of many of them in the name of economy promises to serve as a classic example of this fact.

When some of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. organizers got busy and formed their own union, it is reported that president George Meany favored establishing normal collective bargaining relations with the new unit. After all, organizers have complaints, and why shouldn't they be represented by a union as much as those they are trying to help? But the majority of the executive board of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. is said to have overruled Mr. Meany, insisting that the organizers were "part of management" and hence could not belong to a union—an argument they must have heard and rejected many times when it came from industry's side of the table.

Then, to top matters off, a number of organizers were recently discharged, among them some who served on the top board of the would-be organizers' union and others with considerable seniority in the labor movement. This move is said to have been dictated by lack of funds, primarily due to the recent loss of dues from the expelled Teamsters union, and this may well be true. Yet there are ways and means of discharging people, and the fact is that many of those who were discharged do not feel they were treated fairly, as evidenced by the picketing that is now going on in front of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. headquarters in Washington.

All in all, the pattern followed in this matter can hardly be considered a model of labor relations. We feel sure the A.F.L.-C.I.O. will continue to hear about it with considerable embarrassment for years to come.

LIMITING NEGRO VOTES

THE STRUGGLE over integration has led numbers of white supremacists to intensify their efforts. Some of this has taken the form of curbing political rights even further in certain states. In the latest instance of this tactic, as reported in the *Christian Science Monitor*, Georgia's General Assembly has amended its registration act in a way that could materially reduce the number of the state's Negro voters.

The new law provides that citizens who cannot prove their literacy by reading and writing satisfactorily sections from the American or Georgia constitutions must answer twenty out of thirty questions such as "How does the Constitution of Georgia provide that a county site may be changed?" . . . "What does the Constitution of the United States provide regarding the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus?"

Yet the Assembly did defeat Governor Griffin's attempt to enact compulsory reregistration of voters every two years and a dollar poll tax. That Georgia's attack on Negro voting rights could have been even more sweeping will supply small comfort if county registration boards do use the law to reduce the already restricted number of Negro voters.

INNOCENT MERRIMENT

TIME WAS when a certain amount of humor showed up around this office. Nothing giddy, you understand, but even in our normally busy schedule there was usually room for a laugh or two. Then along came this psychiatrist out in Southern California, one Dr. Martin Grotjahn, who has written a book on the nature of humor and is considered to be quite an expert on the subject. In a recent dispatch, the Associated Press went to the trouble of reporting his views on the matter in some detail, and life around here has not been the same since.

"A wit," said Dr. Grotjahn, "is an angry man in search of a victim. A witticism is his way of releasing repressed hostility." Don't get the psychiatrist wrong, though; he is in favor of humor. "Laughter," he said, "as it provides a permissible release of unconscious aggressions, is one of the best safeguards of mental health. In fact, the entertainer is a friend of psychiatry even though he is sick and doesn't know it." As for the man who produces a witticism, he is engaging in a positively therapeutic action: "If a wit didn't have this outlet, a headache might occur."

Well, things have been quiet around here—not to say downright dull—ever since. The plain fact is that no one has had the courage to betray his repressed hostility by making a joke. We realize, of course, that if the doctor's theory is correct we are all building up to the world's worst headache. But if anyone has developed a king-sized migraine up to this point, he has kept the matter to himself—something we wish the California psychiatrist had done with his theory, come to think of it. It looks like a long, non-humorous year ahead.

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Dictators and Dictatorships

Was 'Fascism' an Episode?

by JOHN A. LUKACS

LAST JANUARY 31 a quarter of a century separated us from the day when huge torchlight parades greeted Adolf Hitler's assumption of power in Germany. For many Americans, college freshmen, for instance, who were born in 1939, conscious memories of the Second World War are either frail or non-existent. For even the end of the Hitler era is now thirteen years away.

But it is not due only to this passage of time that the era marked in Western history by that extraordinary person, Hitler, is now obscured. Its present obscurity owes much to our now enduring preoccupation with quite another totalitarian danger, that of Communism. Moreover, though oceans of ink and mountains of paper were expended on the so-called "Fascist" issue, the overwhelming mass of the contemporary accounts were ephemeral and did not stand the test of time. Thus, especially in America, there is reason to believe that our notions about the "Fascist" era are confused, insubstantial, and, generally, quite wrong.

We must begin by clearing up the confusion of leftover categories. This confusion has resulted from an oversimplification: the erroneous attribution of the "Fascist" adjective to *all* "Rightist," or non-Communist, dictatorships. Yet the main types of dictatorships in the first half of the twentieth century seem to have been at least four-fold: the Communist, the prototype of which has been Russia; the National Socialist, the prototype of which was Hitler's Germany; the Fascist, the prototype of which was Mussolini's Italy; the authoritarian, *a* prototype of which may be Salazar's Portugal.

Though these categories are neither perfect nor exclusive, two fundamental considerations emerge from them. The first is that not every modern dictatorship is totalitarian, since in some of the authoritarian régimes there remain important segments of private life that are excluded from the interference of the State. The second is that Hitler was not really a Fascist, and that there is an essential distinction between Fascism and National Socialism. The original doctrines of Fascism were cruel, lucid, rational, Latin; the postulates of Hitlerian National Socialism were crude, turgid, emotional, Germanic. The Mussolinian ideal was a neo-Renaissance one, strongly reminiscent of Machiavelli, with an important residue of aristocratism; the Hitlerian emotion was strongly reminiscent of the anti-Renaissance fury of Luther, with a powerful populist appeal. In retrospect, this distinction has been recognized by a few historians, but the confusion of "Fascist" with "National Socialist" persists today.

Significantly enough, the confusion of these two terms has been an early, and enduring, success of Soviet propaganda. Ever since about 1932 the terms "National Socialist" or "Nazi" have been prohibited in Russia; the approved terms were "Fascists" and "Hitlerites." This blanket employment of the "Fascist" term immediately took root among the commentators and journalists of the West, particularly in Britain and America. It is evident that calling every non-Communist form of dictatorship "Fascist" suited Soviet purposes rather well; what is not so evident is the answer to the question of why already in 1932 Stalin insisted on suppressing the "National Socialist," "Nazi" terms.

The answer is now furnished by the historical development of Soviet Russia; it lies in what may be called the common ideological denominator between the three main totalitarian systems. Speaking of the Communist, the Fascist, and the National Socialist, which one influenced the others more? This is an important question, for a comparison of their respective and reciprocal influences will also indicate which was the strongest and the most enduring of the three.

The results of such a comparison will be remarkable. It is obviously nonsense to call Stalin a Fascist or Mussolini a Communist; yet the "national socialist"

Mr. Lukacs is the author of The Great Powers and Eastern Europe, a study in recent diplomatic history.

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adjective fits both rather well. As the years advanced, Stalin became less and less internationalist and more and more nationalistic and even race-minded; so did Mussolini. This is, of course, why Stalin back in 1932 proscribed the "national socialist" term: it fitted his evolving Russian State only too well. Thus, while of the three dictators Hitler was the one who seems to be most repudiated by posterity and perhaps even by his own people, we find that it was his national socialism whose impact on the other two prototypical dictatorships steadily increased and, in the case of Stalin's Russia, even survived Hitler's death. This is the first reason why we may assert that national socialism did not die with Hitler.

LET US look, for once, at the original, simple, literal meaning of *national* and of *socialism*. The history of internationalist ("Leftist") socialism is now old; it precedes Marx, going back to Saint-Simon, to Owen, to the Diggers. In European history, then, 1848 marks a great turning-point. Yes, of course: 1847-48 marks the appearance of the *Communist Manifesto;* but there is reason to believe that, with time, the importance attributed to that milestone will fade. In 1848 the popular election of Louis Napoleon (and there are other significant examples) marks the first open conflict of the supposedly so harmonious ideals of Liberty and Equality. The year 1848 marks the first appearance of modern national, as distinct from international, socialist movements. Their impact has grown ever since.

Throughout the twentieth century the earlier fresh and humanitarian appeals of international socialism in the Western world continue to fade: the leading socialist prophets become old, respected, solitary figures. At the same time, a similar thing happened to another old-fashioned thing: to patriotic (as distinct from ideological) nationalism, with its traditionalist, military, and semi-feudal tinge; consider the fading of the MacArthur-type (the image eclipsed by the newer type of a McCarthy), or of the old-Prussian type (whose most typical representatives were brutally eliminated by Hitler). Instead of old-fashioned internationalist socialism, and of old-fashioned patriotic nationalism, it seems that the merging concept of nationalism with socialism has arisen to be the dominant ideological constellation of this century. On one hand, furthered by the exigencies of our technological civilization, the bureaucratized welfare state exists practically everywhere in the world. On the other hand, what Hitler first sensed fifty years ago has proven true in many places since, that the appeal of national, popular, racial or ideological emotions may carry the modern politician further than the benevolent socialist appeals to international brotherhood.

Thus it may be said that national socialism, in one way or another, became the common denominator not only of the totalitarian but even of many of the authoritarian and the democratic mass movements of the twentieth century. There are great differences between Perón, Mao, Mussolini, Tito, Trujillo, Stalin, Nasser, the Falangists, Hitler, Khrushchev: but in one way or another all of them are national socialists. To a considerable extent (always overlooked by his "liberal" victims who consistently failed to observe his repeated pro-labor and parity-plus advocacies), so was the late Joseph R. McCarthy. Or, indeed—all appearances and categories and his magazine-drawn opinions about "Free Enterprise" and his voting record notwithstanding—so is the very much present Organization Man. And this is the second reason why national socialism might be more than just a brief and erratic bloody episode now past.

The distinction between national socialism in general and the Hitler variety in particular must, of course, be kept in mind. Though the impact of the Hitler variety has been greater than people now believe, not every manifestation of national socialism will necessarily conform to the Hitlerite ideology: anti-Semitism, for example, is not necessarily a part of every national socialist movement or State. Still, in a larger sense, and according to the original meaning of the terms, McCarthy as well as Tito may be considered national socialists; but, then, so could Gomulka or perhaps even Bevan. The category is too broad, but here we are concerned not so much with the applicability of the national socialist designation as with the possible universality of the Hitlerite experience. Was it or was it not an episode now definitely closed?

The relationship of Hitlerite National Socialism with Germandom has been interpreted in a variety of ways. At one extreme we find what may be called the Vansittartist view, in which Hitlerism was not only a typically but an inherently German phenomenon. On the other extreme stands what we may perhaps call the Toynbeean interpretation, according to which the Germans should be absolved from having had any special affinity for such a criminal system, since what happened in Germany could have happened elsewhere. The interesting thing is that both of these seemingly opposite interpretations contain a good deal of half-truths, and that the truth may be not between but above these two opposite poles.

During the past hundred years in the West a Germanic ascendancy occurred which is not only political but technical and cultural. There is reason to believe that, ever since about 1850, German forms of thought have predominated over the earlier Gallic primary forms and spiritual influences. This is not so much the issue of the philosophical influences of Schopenhauer, Ranke, Nietzsche and Spengler eclipsing the earlier predominance of Montesquieu and Voltaire; in our demo-

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cratic age the texture of history has changed and the symbols of German influence now include the global appearance of such things as accordion music and the Volkswagen. This is the age of gadgets, of popular culture and popular emotions; it is an age particularly suited to bureaucracy, to efficiency experts, technological specialists, rocket makers, Organization Men—an age to the forms of which the Germanic temper is eminently suited, just as for the Age of Reason in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the French intellectual temper was suited.

Right now Germany is the most prosperous nation in Europe. All over the world the reputation of the German people and of their industry is tremendous. Apart from any new specter of German imperialism, or even the dangers of German economic supremacy, there is a consideration less evident but more deep-going. If we consider the growing prestige of Germandom, is there no reason to believe that the image of that, at least in part, typically German and at times most spectacular form of anti-Communism, national socialism, might gain new and dangerous lustre for future generations?

Despite the many truly reassuring aspects of present Germany, we must remember certain things. We must remember that party figures in electoral statistics are not always reliable indices of potential popular sentiment. We must remember that though thirteen years after Waterloo the Napoleonic legend in France was virtually non-existent, it suddenly rose again not ten, not twenty, but more than thirty years after Waterloo. We must remind ourselves that the most potent force against the resurgence of the Hitler legend is the memory of those men and women who experienced or at least sensed its misdeeds in person, and that soon new generations will have risen whose notions about Hitler, National Socialism, Fascism, will come from superficial or unconvincing textbooks. With the passing of time, the prestige of Germandom may further increase and the memories of the Nazi cruelties fade.

TO THIS third reason for not considering the Hitler era an historically closed episode it should be added that the German Revolution of 1933 was something entirely new. It was not a nineteenth-century revolution; it was not an authoritarian *coup d'état*; it was what may be called a Legal Revolution. This is why it remained unchallenged for so long; and this is at least one reason why that which happened in Germany in 1933 deserves far more careful attention from liberty-loving people in the now so heavily bureaucratized democracies of the West than do the barbaric processes of the Soviet Revolution of 1917 or the artificial processes of the Communist coups in Eastern Europe after 1945, imposed as these latter were on unwilling populations by the mere external force of Russian arms. Here we touch on the problem of the social interpretation of Hitlerism.

This has already passed through two phases. The first thesis (largely under Left-wing influence) argued that Hitlerism was an anti-democratic and reactionary movement, foisted upon Germany by feudalist Junkers and capitalist magnates. This is, of course, largely nonsense. It has been counterbalanced by conservative historians and thinkers, who ever since the upper-class anti-Hitler conspiracy of July, 1944 argued that the Hitlerian system was essentially anti-aristocratic and proletarian. This thesis makes much more sense than the first but it is also somewhat incomplete.

The truth seems to be that Hitlerite national socialism succeeded in appealing to aristocratic as well as democratic elements of society, perverting "conservative" as well as "liberal" and "radical" political elements for its own use, confusing the masses of "Right" and "Left" alike. Perhaps the most important contributions to the anatomy of this peculiar ideological devolution was the book of the Swiss Armin Mohler, *Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland*; for, while Mohler deeply sensed the mass-democratic and socialist essence of Hitlerism, he pointed out how a certain strain of "conservative" thought helped to propel Hitler along in the crucial years before he came to power. Almost certainly the simplest, and the best, explanation of this dual character of national socialism is to be found in an essay by the British historian C. V. Wedgwood, entitled "Aspects of Politics," reprinted in a little book, *Velvet Studies*, in 1946.

What Veronica Wedgwood says is that Nazism, unlike Communism, "is the disease of democracy . . . Therein lies its peculiar danger. . . .The casual use of such words as despotism, dictatorship, tyranny—all of them dating from pre-democratic periods—confuses the issue. 'Fascism,' though it leads in the old Machiavellian way by craft and conquest to the elevation of one man or of one small group, can only succeed first by seducing 'the people' . . . 'The people' may be silenced, intimidated and crushed, but they must also in large measure *believe*. . . ." This observation, made in 1945, sums up the reasons why national socialism might not be regarded a finished chapter.

Now, however, thirteen years later, there is considerable new evidence to assert that not only the Fascist and the Nazi but perhaps the entire single dictatorship phase in Western history may have been

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an episode after all. Lenin, Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin are dead. For the past decade voting results in Italy and Germany show that the appeal of neo-Fascist and neo-Nazi parties has been small indeed. The Polish and Hungarian events revealed the weak impact of Communism even on the imagination of a rigorously indoctrinated generation. Meanwhile Franco depends on American aid, Perón and Pérez Jimenez are in exile, Trujillo and Batista are weakening, the succession to Tito remains doubtful, and some of the most dedicated Communists in Eastern Europe are either in jail or abroad writing angry books against the system. In Western Europe Fascist and National Socialist movements are practically non-existent; Communists are riven asunder, as in the United States, where, to bring up some classic liberal bugaboos, McCarthy is buried, John Kasper on the verge of jail, his patron Ezra Pound for the past ten years in a mental hospital, Father Coughlin off the air for the past twenty years.

This is not to argue that the area of human freedom has greatly increased since the last world war. But if we recall that after the first world war, between 1918 and 1938, no less than seventeen European nations abandoned their earlier liberal-democratic constitutions for some sort of dictatorship, and did this spontaneously, without German or Italian armies forcing Nazi or Fascist régimes on them, then the record of the years from 1945 to 1958 is somewhat reassuring.

The question whether "Fascism" or, indeed, European totalitarianism, was but an episode thus remains open. Yet there are several conclusions.

The first concerns Mussolini and Hitler together. They should never be considered mere pompous fools or madmen. True, they were defeated, while the great democracies and Stalin's Russia emerged victorious. Yet there is reason to believe that the Mussolinian and even the Hitlerian analysis of societies was, in many respects, superior to the Marxian one. We have learned that the basic premise of Marxism, that history and human passions are determined by economics, contains less truth than the Fascist or the Hitlerite realization of the emotional (they called it spiritual) factor. Thus, while Communism might represent the Lie, Mussolini and Hitler represented Half-Truths. Given the rational traditions of Western civilization, this was especially disastrous since, as St. Thomas suggested, the half-truth may be more dangerous and evil than the lie.

The second conclusion concerns Hitler and Communism. It is an ironic paradox that the anti-Communist crusader not only contributed to the rule of Communism over a large part of Europe but at the same time ended up by overestimating the powers of Communism. It was the anti-Communist Hitler who in 1939 delivered entire nations of Eastern Europe to Stalin in a pact which the Western democracies had felt they could not morally afford to grant to the latter. Then in the end Hitler claimed that he had formed the only remaining bulwark against Communism, which Churchill and Roosevelt were destroying. But, after all, Western Europe did not become Communist, and even in Eastern Europe the tyrannical power, not to speak of the spiritual impact, of the Soviets has now cracked and weakened. With all of his famous *Realpolitik,* Hitler underestimated the resistant power of Russia; with all of his exaltation of the spiritual factor in history, he underestimated the power and the resilience of the European spirit when compared with the dull and deadening dogma of Oriental despotism.

The third conclusion concerns totalitarianism in general. It is that the totalitarianism may well have been a significant phase of that great transition away from an Age of Reason which we are beginning to witness. We may now be gradually passing from an Age of Reason towards a new age, perhaps to a New Age of Faith. This is not the place to discuss the validity of such a broad hypothesis. But the transition from the rationalistic to the fideistic temper is very clearly visible in the devolution of all totalitarian systems. In the beginning, every one of them was based on a rational, even a "scientific" principle. Yet, as these movements progressed, it became evident that their main requirement was no longer adherence to the original idea but blind faith in the Leader and in the vague "movement." Thus in Stalinite Russia a hack bureaucrat who was loyal to Stalin was safe, while the most devoted Marxist was not; Hitler came to prefer dark-skinned Rumanian or Levantine Hitlerites to his earlier racial idols, the fair and erect Prussian generals. Unlike old-fashioned anti-Semites (Belloc) or old-fashioned racialists (Gobineau), Hitler was a *Judaeophobe* rather than an anti-Semite. He held against Jews not so much the physical "fact" of their racial inferiority but what, to him, was their *inherent incapacity to believe* in the National Socialist Faith. In the end Stalin, Hitler and even Mussolini simply said that "he who is not with me is against me." Thus did these totalitarian systems, born out of new ideas in an Age of Science, degenerate into some sort of bloody fideism in the end.

But to pose "he who is not with me is against me" as if it were a political question is blasphemy, since in its absoluteness it is a question which only the Son of God is permitted to ask. And this is why in these coming decades of great transition, when old systems and forms will crumble, it ultimately depends on ourselves whether we will permit the political Messiahs to ask this question or not. It depends on ourselves whether the totalitarian systems of the twentieth century will represent an episode in history of whether they will prove but the first wave in the worst series of catastrophes that have yet threatened mankind.

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Loopholes and limitations
in our minimum wage laws

The Bare Minimum

by TED LE BERTHON

THE HEARINGS conducted by both houses of the Eighty-fifth Congress last year on two bills to extend the federal $1 an hour minimum wage law to more American workers, and on three which would raise the minimum to $1.25, were significant for what they revealed of the current national mentality. No new legislation was enacted, but two significantly opposed economic philosophies emerged.

The thinking of a long parade of management witnesses representing many diverse fields of endeavor was monotonously uniform. So was the opposed outlook of labor's many spokesmen. Management was repetitiously insistent that any wage increases would have to be passed on to consumers and would bring about a dangerous inflationary spiral. *Laissez faire* also raised its ugly head again and again, as if management were dreaming of a future in terms of the 1920's. On the other hand, one labor spokesman after another argued that to extend and likewise increase the minimum wage would provide greater mass purchasing power. This in turn would enable management to employ more workers, produce and sell more goods, and make a fair profit *without* having to pass on wage increases to consumers. *Ergo,* this would make for a sound, properly balanced national economy.

The result? Only one bill of the five introduced got beyond subcommittee hearings, and this one only got as far as to be reported out of the labor subcommittee of the Senate labor and welfare committee to the full committee—but *without* recommendation. This was a measure jointly introduced by Senators John F. Kennedy (D.) of Massachusetts and Pat McNamara (D.) of Michigan which would extend the $1 an hour minimum to some six million more workers.

Of the other four bills, two were identical. Senator Wayne Morse (D.) of Oregon and Representative Augustine B. Kelley (D.) of Pennsylvania wrote the Morse-Kelley bill. It would increase the present $1 an hour minimum to $1.25 and extend it to about nine and a half million more workers, along with a forty-hour week and time and a half for overtime. It was promptly endorsed by the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Another bill calling for $1.25 an hour, to be extended to the same additional number of workers but without the overtime provision, was introduced by Representative James Roosevelt (D.) of California. Still another, to extend the present $1 an hour minimum to only some two and a half million more workers, was introduced by Representative Joseph R. Holt (R.) of California; it received the blessing of President Eisenhower and the favorable testimony of Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell.

IT MAY astonish some Americans to know that the present $1 an hour federal minimum wage law, passed less than two years ago, does not cover an immense number of occupations. Here are a few of the unprotected: retail clerks and persons employed by telephone and telegraph companies, hotels, transit companies, radio stations, restaurants, laundries, construction companies, shipping lines, food-processing factories, and commercial farms.

True, workers in some of these lines, thanks to union contracts, make well above $1 an hour, but testimony brought out that many do not. Much depends on the state in which such workers reside, and whether —and how well—they are organized.

State minimum wage laws are virtually no help whatever, especially to the adult male, the actual or potential family head and breadwinner. Only twenty-nine states have minimum wage laws, and these invariably cover only women and girls, or, as in New York, only women and minors of either sex. Nineteen of these twenty-nine states fix minimum wages by occupation, following hearings before industrial commissions. Ten spell out a minimum over-all wage for both sexes, but in eight of them the minimum is well below $1 an hour. Thus it is pretty rough going everywhere for workers not covered by the federal $1 an hour minimum. And in no state does any sort of minimum apply to farm workers and domestic servants.

Most Southern states have no minimum wage law. I note this specifically because a sizable number of business leaders who testified before the Senate and House subcommittees loudly held forth for states' rights. They contended that any blanket federal minimum wage law is unjust and inequitable because of the differ-

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ing economies of states and held that only states should be privileged to enact minimum wage laws.

It was to examine varying state and regional economies that the labor standards subcommittee of the House committee on education and labor "roadshowed" minimum wage extension hearings last fall. The hearings were conducted in key cities, large and small, from coast to coast by Representatives Roosevelt (D.) and Holt (R.) working as a team.

This writer attended the hearings held in Fresno, California, and heard California counterparts echo pretty much what had been said by national business and labor leaders in Washington. Yet there was one inevitable difference in the status of witnesses.

In Washington, most of the management spokesmen were heads of national business associations, or at least represented such interests as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Motion Picture Theater Owners of America, the American Transit Association, the National Retail Dry Goods Association, the National Cotton Council, the Vegetable Growers Association of America, and the American Pulpwood Association, to mention a few. Labor was represented by such men as George Meany, A.F.L.-C.I.O. President; Joseph A. Beirne, president of the Communication Workers of America (A.F.L.-C.I.O.); and Max Greenberg, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (A.F.L.-C.I.O.). But in Fresno, of thirty-two witnesses, twenty-one were individual owners of large and small businesses, industries, and farms; nine were local and regional labor officials; and two represented religion.

THE CALIFORNIA PROCEEDINGS were considerably enlivened when one labor official accused Big Business, Big Industry and Big Agriculture of having too many small local merchants, small factory owners and small farmers fronting for them. The labor man said that "Mr. Little's" testimony about inability to pay was making it falsely appear that "Mr. Little" would suffer even more than "Mr. Big" if even the present $1 an hour federal minimum wage law was extended to *any* more workers.

This charge reminded me that back at the Washington hearings some tears, figuratively speaking, had been shed for "Mr. Big," but even more for "Mr. Little," by a spokesman for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Eugene B. Sydnor of Richmond, Va. Mr. Sydnor would not even go along with the Administration's modest proposal to extend the $1 an hour minimum to some two and a half million more workers, most of them retail clerks working for firms in interstate commerce employing one hundred or more persons and achieving at least a million dollars in sales a year. This, Mr. Sydnor sternly protested, would have "an inflationary impact on the entire nation," would adversely effect chain stores, but—worst of all—would "drive an increasing number of small local merchants throughout the nation out of business."

What especially brightened the Fresno hearings was testimony utterly at variance with Sydnor's. John B. Philpott, organizational director of the Retail Clerks Union (A.F.L.-C.I.O.) for five western states, pointed out that small local merchants all over the United States are generally paying far above $1 an hour to clerks and would not be at all injured by an extension of the federal $1 an hour minimum wage, or even by an increase to $1.25. He said that his union was interested in making any federal minimum wage law applicable only to chain or local stores employing twenty-five or more persons and making sales of $500,000 or more a year.

Mr. Philpott declared that small local merchants almost invariably pay higher wages than do chain stores, and equated low wage levels in chain stores with their preferential hiring policies. Such firms as the F. W. Woolworth Company, he said, employ mostly married women and girl high-school graduates because "they can get them cheap." He read a U.S. Department of Commerce report which revealed that in cities of about 100,000 population (Fresno is in that category) chain stores, while less than seven per cent of the total number, accounted in 1956 for sixty-one per cent of total annual sales. "That's the story of Main Street, U.S.A.," he commented laconically. Then Mr. Philpott proceeded to question the management claim that a blanket federal minimum wage law is unjust or inequitable in less prosperous states. Again using the Woolworth stores as an example, he said that their prices for all articles are uniform nationally, that even their lunch counter menus throughout the nation have identical price listings "and are all printed in one place."

LARGE-SCALE agriculturalists and the associations they dominate came in for their lumps at the hands of two representatives of religion. Bard McAllister of Visalia, farm labor secretary of the American Friends Service Committee for the San Joaquin valley, pointed out that big growers of government-subsidized crops often pay the lowest wages or piece-rate compensation to crop-harvesters; he thought these growers, whose own profits are protected by the federal

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government, should also be willing to have their workers protected by a federal minimum wage law. Father Thomas A. McCullough of Stockton, representing the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, called extension of a federal minimum wage law to farm workers a "must," because growers threaten to fire them if they join a labor union, and carry out their threats in many cases; he said it was high time that government and employers recognize farm workers as human beings entitled to a living wage and decent housing.

Small farmers—those with four hundred acres or less—insisted, just as did large-scale operators—that they should be exempt from any sort of minimum wage payments because of the caprices of the weather and the market. One grower, with fairly large holdings, said that if the Morse-Kelley bill ever became law, all farmers would be ruined. To pay farm workers $1.25 an hour for a 40-hour week, plus time and one-half overtime, was to him a fantastic proposal by men who apparently knew nothing about farming. He said that most crop-pickers must work 60 to 72 hours a week to bring in a crop, that generally they are employed on a piece-rate basis and not at an hourly wage. On this point he proved to be an amazing Biblical exegete, stating that growers usually pay on a piece-rate basis "because we believe the laborer should be worthy of his hire."

The fact is that small farmers pay more for labor than do the individuals and corporations owning thousands of acres. Small farmers generally bring a crop in within a few days, hiring locally available workers, to whom they pay more than the large growers pay the imported *braceros* and desperately needy migrants. This is because the small farmer is rarely able to provide housing.

IT WOULD be too pat, though, solely to blame bigness in agriculture, industry and business—along with an Administration favorable to it—for the sorry conditions of so many classifications of workers who are without the protection of the present $1 an hour federal minimum wage law. For instance, organized labor as a whole, and various big unions with well-larded treasuries, have for many years foregone any attempt either to organize farm workers or financially assist small unions which have made the attempt. Strike after strike by farm workers in the past has failed because some union to which they have belonged has been unable to pay their rent, or the utilities or food bills for any length of time. Too, it could be more than coincidence that organized labor and the Farm Bloc—whose thinking is dominated by the larger landowners—have frequently favored the same candidates for public office. The suspicion will not down that powerful unions have agreed to be blind to the existence of farm workers.

The National Catholic Rural Life Conference, in its annual policy statement last November, declared: "We urge organized labor to encourage existing industrial unions either to accept agricultural workers into their own membership or else to train and *assist* agricultural workers to form their own *effective* and responsible unions. We know such an effort would be replete with difficulties and would cost much in terms of men and money. But a larger degree of service to *all* workers is the high aim of organized labor."

This may be the high aim ideally, but has it been the practice? Have highly skilled and well-paid craft and industrial unionists been greatly concerned for those less fortunate workers unprotected by the federal minimum wage law? After all, there are many categories of the less fortunate.

In Fresno, taxi drivers for the Yellow Cab Company belong to the Teamsters Union. Dues: $5 a month. For ten years past, the cab company has guaranteed each driver $42 for a 54-hour week. I've talked with scores of cab drivers. They say they must work 66 or more hours a week to earn from $55 to $60 on a commission basis. Tips average $1 a day. Nine out of ten of the drivers are married, and say they have a hard time making ends meet. Yet the Teamsters have never negotiated a pay-rate raise for them, nor been willing to authorize a strike, although the union has secured a $130 a week minimum for their truck drivers. The taxi drivers insist that it takes as much skill and sense of responsibility to transport human beings safely as it does to transport oil, lumber or foodstuffs, and they say the "big boss" of the cab company insists they join the Teamsters Union as a condition of employment. It seems to me a suspiciously cozy arrangement. One can only wonder how many comparable situations in many lines of work exist the length and breadth of these United States.

At its Atlantic City convention in December the A.F.L.-C.I.O. passed a resolution to redouble efforts in 1958 to "bring trade unionism to every worker in America." Brave, stirring words, but unfortunately reminiscent of politicians' Fourth of July speeches. Really to implement those words will require first of all an examination of conscience, especially on the part of financially well-off unions, then a firm resolve to avoid entangling alliances with vested interests, even in the realm of "not so practical politics." Labor leaders who followed the Washington or regional hearings on extending the Federal minimum wage law should know the economic philosophy of most capital and management, jabberwocky about "modern Republicanism" notwithstanding. It was well summed up by a representative of a growers' association who testified in Fresno: "All we ask is to be let alone, and let the law of supply and demand take its course."

Adam Smith could not have put it more neatly.

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Sentimentality and good humor are the natural enemies of satire

No Offense Intended

by JOHN P. SISK

LAST SUMMER in the New York *Times Book Review* British novelist Kingsley Amis predicted for the near future a golden age of satire. "The welfare democracy, with its internal shifts in the balance of power," he said, "is a satirical arena far vaster and richer than the stratified democracy which is now yielding place to it. . . . Aristocratic posturings are at their most vapid and most vulnerable." Mr. Amis conceded that his prediction made more sense in England than in America, but it was nevertheless obvious that his expectations included both sides of the Atlantic.

I suspect that many American readers agreed with Mr. Amis less from the cogency of his argument than from a wish to see his prediction come true. But while we are waiting for the vision in his crystal ball to materialize, it might be useful to consider some of the factors that make a golden age of satire unlikely, at least in America.

The term "golden age" implies, especially for satire, a relatively large and enthusiastic body of readers, and, since satire is evaluation, it further implies a substantial sharing of values between writer and reader. It is true of course that any collection of people by the very fact of being organized into a society will have a community of information, myths, customs, legends, etc. that make some satire possible. But one still wonders upon what ground a really robust body of satire will take its stand in an increasingly pluralistic America.

I am aware that my argument must advance in the face of a great deal of already existing, if largely incidental, satire. The American writer in the twentieth century has been conspicuously a discontented and disenchanted man. This content has often been expressed as satire. But most of this satire has not only been subordinate to other objectives but negative; that is, it has been easier to tell what the satirist is against than what he is for. That is why we so often ask about present and past American satire the questions Robert Penn Warren asks about Mary McCarthy's *The Company She Keeps:* "What are the premises of the satire? . . . Does one have a sense of the terms on which the author would pick up the pieces and put them together again?"

Characteristically, the American satirist's complaint about the existing order of things has a reference to some ambiguous and unfulfilled utopian promise: in an iron time he is like a man trying to remember the details of a golden legend told to him long ago by a doting grandfather. American satire is therefore predominantly pastoral: founded upon dreams of simplicity and innocence. That is why there is so much bitterness in it, as there is, for instance, in much of Mark Twain. The satirist feels cheated and does not so much want to improve society as punish it for having failed him. Thus the American Dream itself, or one prevalent version of it, works against the satirist, not only by making him hope for too much but by making him hope for the wrong things.

BUT A more immediate handicap to the satirist is the sectarian touchiness of the pluralist society in which he lives. This is apparent enough in the popular arts. George Gobel, who might if left to his own devices be a good popular satirist, complains that "a T.V. comic nowadays needs the soul of a seismograph to know where the next rumble of public wrath is coming from." The vociferous minorities thus protect themselves and the entire society settles for mediocrity in its wit and humor.

Mr. Gobel is in agreement with more literary observers. Gore Vidal speaks of a firmly established tradition in television "that comedies seldom work and that satire never does." And John Lardner, in the same vein, complains that on the air the taste for comedy with its "opportunity for satire and comic criticism . . . is in danger of being bred out of the species."

Those who think of the stage as being a less restricted area for the satirist should heed Mr. Vidal who says that, in fact, the initial televised version of "Visit to a Small Planet" was closer to his original conception than the expanded stage version. For the stage he was forced to dull deliberately the edge of his satire.

Those who think that there is a great deal of satire in motion pictures are impressed with the bulk of purely incidental satire or are inclined to identify as satire any of the means that can be used for satiric purposes:

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farce, burlesque caricature, travesty, mock-heroic, etc. There is nothing wrong with these means in themselves; it is only that they do not necessarily result in that kind of derisory exposure of vice or folly that is called satire. They can even overwhelm a satiric objective, as so often happened in the Marx brothers' pictures.

Most of the movie wit and humor that passes for satire is satire only by the most charitable extension of the term. It is not seriously enough concerned with its targets; it exploits them for amusement's sake rather than attacking them vigorously. Or it attacks and then retracts its claws at the first sign of blood. It takes a great deal of discipline and courage to hold onto a satiric idea once it has been conceived, one reason why so many pictures end up by very nearly espousing the attitudes they set out to expose.

And satire at its best demands that the audience or reader exercise a discipline corresponding to the artist's. The American public, for instance, can tolerate and even enjoy a bit of kidding on many subjects, provided the kidding is locked safely in a context that neutralizes it. But the radical attack of the satirist, unless preceded by a good deal of reeducation, would only bewilder, shock or anger most of the reading or movie-going public.

I AM NOT trying here to belittle the modern popular audience in favor of some earlier popular audience —that favorite pastime of disgruntled Marxists and liberals, as Edward Shills argues in the autumn *Sewanee Review*. The point is that the vision of the good satirist is a highly abstract one. It presumes an audience capable of a sophisticated detachment on the one hand and a genuine concern for civilizing standards on the other. At no time has such an audience been very large—though no doubt it could be larger if those who communicate with the mass audience were not so convinced that it is incorrigible. That is why it is necessary to postulate a special audience of young Elizabethan law students for Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida;* why Defoe was pilloried for his "Shortest Way with the Dissenters"; why *Gulliver's Travels* has had such success as a children's story, and why many Irishmen are still not sure what side Swift was on when he wrote his "Modest Proposal"; why after *The Loved One* Evelyn Waugh was so unpopular with so many Americans.

The satire that does appeal to the general audience tends to be broad, coarse-grained, heavy-handed and naive in its premises. The present satiric attacks on the inanities of eggheads and bureaucrats, for instance, suffer from the general tendency to appeal, explicitly or implicitly, to a "natural" and simple way of doing things that is irrelevant to problems of management in the complex modern world. Like so much soldier-written wartime satire, it expresses individual frustration rather than critical insight.

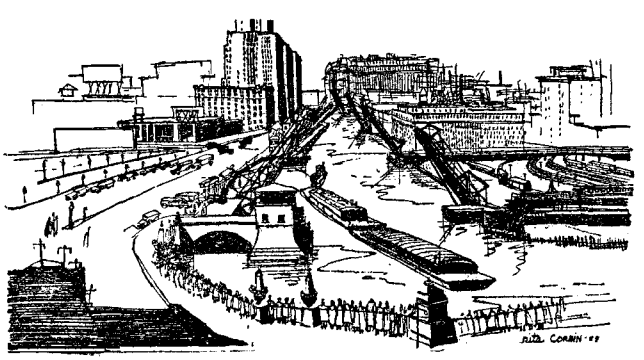
Since the popular satirist has to work with widely accepted targets, he tends to attack foibles rather than serious defections. The foibles are not only what most people will agree on but what they will suffer themselves to be accused of. One can have foibles without losing the sympathy and affection of his fellow men. But the satirist who tries to cut deeper than this will find either a sadly divided audience or one that will not permit serious defections to be treated with satiric "levity." Generally, this means that the popular satirist is popular at the expense of seriousness.

Popular satire is also weakened by its dependence upon hyperbole. Hyperbole is legitimate enough as a satiric means, but it is undercut by the already excessive nature of most targets acceptable to large audiences. This is why it is so hard for the popular satirist to come to grips with such traditional targets as the duplicity of politicians, the posturing of movie stars or the extravagancies of cranks and faddists.

Indeed, the tendency in popular criticism is to avoid the word "satire" altogether, and to rely upon the term "spoof." For "spoof" suggests a good-humored pretense at satire. It leaves all parties involved pleasantly aware that they have a sense of humor and so protects them from any uncomfortable urges to corrective action. The spoofer, in fact, by protectively swathing the target in sentimentality and good humor, may be the satirist's worst enemy.

THE SPOOF, nevertheless, may be all a society like ours thinks it can risk. The vociferous minorities protect not only themselves but one another, but less out of charity than out of a common awareness of the importance of co-existence: which is also a shared fear of the dissension and chaos that is always in potential. Each minority thinks not only of all other minorities but of itself in terms of containment, fearing the divisive implications of its ambitions.

There remain in actual fact a great deal of dissension, suspicion and criticism, but the holding back is still an important national characteristic. An instinct for it has of necessity been bred into Americans; and Americans are so used to it that they are less aware of it than of the potential divisiveness it keeps in check. The instinct is one reason why we get along as well as we do.



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In a period when there is little community of moral and religious values the individual's hypersensitivity to the expectations others have of him (which include their expectation that he will not violate their private sanctities) is an important if somewhat negative cohesive factor.

But this is also why there is so little prospect of a golden age of satire in America. Americans are like an over-polite family in which the satirist is the caustic malcontent who will not forget the private pettiness and follies of its members. If the family has to choose between facing up to the unlovely facts and being content with its hard-won harmony, it is easy to understand why it will choose the latter.

Whether it is a wise choice, or whether there are only these choices, is another matter. Under the surface harmony there is a great deal of tension in this family, and part of it comes from the suppression of another family characteristic. Traditionally the American is a man who announces his opinions boldly, and in this tradition he is fortified by an image of himself as a clear-eyed innocent naturally gifted to see folly, corruption and deception for what they are and to call them courageously by their right names—to do, in fact, what the satirist more articulately does. The proportions of fact and fiction that make up this image remain to be determined, but it suggests that our fear of the satirist is really a fear of a part of ourselves; and that even clipping the claws of a T.V. comic is an act of self-frustration.

AS PETRARCH COMING

Benedetto sia 'l giorno e 'l mese e l'anno . . .
Rime, I, sonetto xxxix

As Petrarch coming with a laurel wreath
to living Laura, blessing bow and day,
I too approach an anniversary
and trim the votive candle of my faith:

alive, and you are dead to me. I wrote
renouncement on your stone. Now, bravery
has tolled to summon all the man in me.
I kneel no longer in my boyhood myth.

The faulty wisdom of a youth who loved
will somehow brim, as mine, into a thirst
which moves him as no christ was ever moved,

to down the sponge of gall because he must.
And it is right, as other love has proved.
I give this Whitman lilac to your dust.

RAYMOND ROSELIEP.

THE STAGE

A QUESTION OF REALITY

IN ART, Mr. Stark Young has it somewhere in *Immortal Shadows,* "reality and the imagination come out eventually to be the same thing. No matter how far the material may be from the strictly factual, the surface actuality; no matter how near it may be to the actual surface, the prose minutiae, you will see that the full exercise of creative imagination can bring it into a reality. When by the creative process of art, something is there where something was not before; it is in this very something that the reality consists. We may say too that no matter how far flown the imagination may be, the result will have reality in so far as it has completeness and organic unity." Mr. Young goes on to affirm his theoretic perception with the lovely image of the moon in water, the same and not the same, incredibly translated by "a certain nameless difference born anew . . . having the charm of presence and absence, as Pascal said of portraits."

These truths have, of course, their own ideal beauty of wisdom and point, and if one instances them now, it is not for that but rather for some constancy of light they may shed on a transient moment. I refer to our current theater of serious assumption, dominated as it is by three native plays: Mr. William Inge's "The Dark at the Top of the Stairs"; the supple tissue of life Mrs. Ketti Frings has fashioned out of "Look Homeward, Angel," and Mr. Morton Wishengrad's darkly ambitious "The Rope Dancers." All have given pleasure, in some events to extremity, provoking passionate championship; none is negligible. Each invokes out of experience major motifs—illusion, greed, thwarted sexuality and pride, suicide, youthful aspiration, tenderness and the irrational—motifs deployed often with authority and sometimes a reckless force. All send down their roots into the fruitful compost of the family situation. All have drawn heavily on the artistic faiths—skills and sensibilities, charged by supreme persuasiveness—of their players. All suggest the neighborhood and possibility of high value. Yet not one goes into the kind of final reality of which Mr. Young speaks: never is the translation achieved, the certain nameless difference born anew. The water refuses to take the moon, and one ends in wary puzzlement: what about the water and the moon? what of *their* reality?

Some effort must be made to convey the savor of these plays, their various worlds of pungency or blandness. Mr. Inge is, of course, the apostle of the domestic; one must admit his positive genius for contracting life to the prosy arena of back porch or parlor or stranded prairie cafe. His modesty gives always a little stir of

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pleasure, it is publicly well thought of; the very refusal of "The Dark at the Top of the Stairs" (*at the Music Box*) to move beyond the cautious immediate, to look remotely like anything conceivable as art ("all that junk jewelry and paint and giving herself airs: who does she think she is!")—this mousy charm has ironically won the play its accolade as Mr. Inge's "best." It is full of the pleasures of recognition: the set a solid horror of delight (period Harding), detailed with imaginative witty love; the sentimental glimpses acute —Miss Eileen Heckart swinging on her halter of iridescent beads, a flapper tugging her foot in curdled glee. Of course, there are deeper ripples: with Mr. Inge, there always are. A husband is riled and a wife slapped; any number of people do not Feel Wanted, and there are echoes of suicide and intimacy ("Do you know I'm frigid?"), deceptively innocuous bits about swords—Symbolism and All That—and sibilant Freudian whispers from the Vienna Woods (I'm Oedipus, who are you?). At the end, Mr. Inge invokes the wise forgiveness of let-us-all-understand-one-another and, charmingly, it works. One never doubted that it would. It has before. Mr. Elia Kazan whips it here to a fine dissonant froth, always with an edge of surprise, though even he cannot animate an insufferably diddling first act. Miss Eileen Heckart gets her toothy pathos with deadly sureness, and Mr. Pat Hingle trumpets a rich note of braying egotism. Miss Teresa Wright seems, sadly, out of her depth; her quality is muted and passive, and never projects. The lesser roles are brilliant portraiture.

Mr. Brooks Atkinson of the New York *Times* has called "The Rope Dancers" (*at the Henry Miller*) "a dark idyll." It is, in any event, a bit of a gloomy wow. There is this Irish family on the lower East Side—Daddy, the blarneyed, boozy braggart, climbs up and down tenement fire-escapes—savoring its various black biles with that just and cosmic relish only my race can comprehend. Margaret, the mother (North of Ireland, please) has been bitten once by love and credulity, and subsequently turns to dressmaking. Though she sees in her daughter—a six-fingered child and an epileptic—the guilty fruit of pleasure, it is not long before she is squirming about the floor again, sneering a lustful invitation, and making rather a show of things with the verbal shock. In moments between, there are bouts of epilepsy, the back of any number of Gaelic hands, and occasional blowsy irruptions of a ginned-up Molly Malone from the flat downstairs (Miss Joan Blondell, hands on hips and ho ho ho). There is no humor, though at one point Miss Blondell admonishes her daughter: "How many times do I have to tell you not to pick your nose in other people's houses?" Mr. Art Carney's feckless charmer has a happy-as-Larry presence, though it is Miss Siobhan McKenna, with her twisted, blasting silence and sinuous disdain, who gives the play whatever it may command of conviction. The title is out of Nietzsche, and *don't you forget it!*

Consideration of other such matters, as well as "Look Homeward, Angel," will be taken up next week.

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

GIFTS FROM ABROAD

WITHOUT disparaging Hollywood movies, it must be admitted that American audiences are fortunate in having foreign films on their screens to vary the diet. These imports not only give our moviegoers an insight into the settings and mores of distant climes but also show what other countries' producers are up to and what they consider entertainment. From Spain has come "The Lovemaker," a beautifully photographed joint French-and-Spanish picture. Although reminiscent of other movies ("Marty," "The Bachelor Party," "Vitelloni") it has a vitality and sensitivity all its own; and it is one of the most distressing movies I've ever seen.

A group of men (they're too old to be called boys), who are bored by their limited and unimaginative amusements as they drift in their spare time from billiard room to bar to brothel in this provincial Spanish town, decide to play a practical joke on a thirty-five-year-old woman whom they consider an old maid. They select the newest and most handsome member of their group to pretend he's in love with her, to court her and even become engaged. Then, they plan, they will announce at a big dance that the whole thing was a joke. The man runs into no difficulties at first: the woman is delighted with his attentions, falls in love with him, becomes his fiancée. But when they start looking at apartments, he has trouble with his conscience, especially when two friends, a visitor from Madrid and a local prostitute, express their shock and shame at what he has done. But he is too cowardly to tell the woman he doesn't love her, and on the day of the dance he runs away.

Perhaps the most amazing thing about "The Lovemaker" is that it carries through to the bitter end as few American films would dare to do. Juan A. Bardem, who directed and wrote the script, allows us to suffer with the woman (played by Betsy Blair with almost painful reality) and with the man (Jose Suarez) who deserves the torture he goes through when he realizes the predicament he's in. Again and again Bardem exhibits his skill as a director—in portraying the town, the thoughtless jokesters who are compared to kids playing with ants, the old maid who knows she's un-

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attractive but not ugly or stupid, the weak man who leads her on and then runs from his responsibility, his visiting friend who thinks Madrid is phony but this provincial town real.

It's real all right; and so is man's inhumanity to man. Bardem never lets us forget this, but in one scene he puts over his point in brilliant cinematic poetry. The woman, elated at her happiness but having a premonition it may end, goes to the ballroom on the afternoon of the big dance. While a man tunes the piano at the other end of the empty, enormous room, the joker's friend from Madrid explains to her that the whole romance was only a joke. The unbelieving woman only half listens to the awful truth as she mentally hears the piano tuner's notes swell into full orchestration of tonight's dance—music that was to accompany her glittering triumph, but which now only follows her to the next touching scene at the railroad station. "The Lovemaker" is obviously not a pleasant movie; but it is compelling.

ANOTHER poetically real picture is "Pather Panchali," an import from India that tells the story of a Brahmin family who live in a small Bengal village. Their food and clothes and customs may be different from ours, but their problems are familiar; and we realize this as we watch the impoverished family struggle along. The father is an impractical dreamer who stands around the house and thinks about jobs when he isn't away from home thinking about jobs. And the mother is a hard-working woman harried by efforts to make ends meet, to prepare meals and keep the house clean—all of which is no easy task with a mischievous son (whom she favors), a daughter (whom the neighbors accuse of stealing) and an aging, trying aunt. The children are a delight to watch as they play, quarrel, go to school and indicate, as the story develops, how the twig is bent.

Directed by Satyajit Roy, who also wrote the script, "Pather Panchali" is a film of great charm, and because it was made in India and is so well-acted by an Indian cast, it should provide a new experience for most moviegoers. Although it moves slowly at times, it covers a wide scope and has much to say about life and death and sorrow and happiness. It has a universality that few films achieve.

FROM ENGLAND has come "Campbell's Kingdom," which has the distinction of being one of the first British "westerns." It has less gun play than our outdoor films, but it is full of rough and tumble as it tells its story of a young Scotsman (Dirk Bogarde) who, having only six months to live, inherits his grandfather's extensive acreage in the Canadian Rockies. He arrives to spend his last days in this beautiful valley high up in the mountains and finds not the peace and quiet he expected but a lot of rowing. The townsfolk are ag'in him because they invested in grandpa's oil ventures and got nothing in return; and now another group led by a contractor and some pretty tough characters are building above his property a dam that will flood it for a hydro-electric project. Needless to say, this controversy leads to plenty of fisticuffs and great excitement when the good guys use the bad guys' cranes and hoists to transport their oil-digging equipment. On the side of Bogarde, who turns out to be rather hardy for a dying man, are James Robertson Justice, Michael Craig and others, including pretty Barbara Murray. Most formidable of the opponents is Stanley Baker as the mean villain who swings a mean right. The story gets rather melodramatic, but the scenery, handsomely photographed in Eastman Color in the Dolomites, is magnificent and alone worth the price of admission.

ALSO FROM England is the welcome reissue of Laurence Olivier's stunning production of "Henry V." Whether or not you saw this on its first time around in 1946, it deserves viewing now. I don't think the current prints gain much by being shown in an English process called Superscope; as a matter of fact they lose a little: in order to stretch the old print across a wide screen, some of its top had to be cut off. But you can still enjoy the beautiful sets and costumes in Technicolor; the film's clever device of starting in the Globe Theater and then expanding for the embarkment episode and elegant French scenes is still effective, and "Henry V" is still one of the best examples of Shakespeare-into-film. It is a spectacle with court pageantry and expertly photographed battle scenes, but the good cast, led by Olivier, do not neglect Shakespeare's resounding poetry and prose. No serious moviegoer should miss the imaginatively-staged night-before-battle scene, Henry's charming courtship of Katharine and the thrilling Battle of Agincourt.

THE ITALIANS, who have sent us many a good film, have now exported a dud called "Beautiful But Dangerous." It has Gina Lollobrigida, who is indeed beautiful, acting as if she were dangerous as the famous early 1900 soprano, Lina Cavalieri. She isn't so much dangerous as silly in a series of revealing costumes and tights while she ogles the men who furnish the romance for this poor mixed-up kid: Vittorio Gassman, Robert Alda, Gino Sinimberghi and various others. It's hard to believe that this film's makers intended us to take it seriously; and to add to the confusion its bad script has been poorly dubbed into English. All of which is unfortunate—because Gina, like Lina, could very well be "the most beautiful woman in the world."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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COMMUNICATIONS

"IRELAND'S ANGRY YOUNG MEN"

New York, N. Y.

TO THE EDITORS: Because I was off on a lecture tour, only today did I get your issue of January 24, with the article (from your correspondent in Britain), "Ireland's Angry Young Men"—the reading of which was painful to me. For the benefit of those who know about Ireland only what the never-sleeping British propagandist feeds to them, let me set down a little information.

One-half of Ulster, the six Northeastern Counties, Britain has made its satellite, with a puppet Orange "Government" in control, whose gang of "B-Specials," equivalent to Russia's secret police, raid night and day, terrorize any who dare act, speak or show a sign of "disloyalty," and brutally beat, torture, try to force "confessions" from arrested suspects. Jails are filled to bursting, hundreds are in concentration camps—the same conditions as in Hungary. And, as in Hungary, the benevolent Neighbor, Friend and Protector has sent his Army of Occupation with its tanks and guns to rivet on this territory the Kadar Orange rule, and to ensure that Ireland's shameful partition will be permanent. (And here let me pause to remind you that Britain the Holy is every day in the market place proclaiming her horror at Russia's heinousness in holding Germany, Korea, etc., dismembered.)

Now there is operating in the afflicted territory, along the odious Border, an underground of a couple of hundred rarely bold—and truly angry—young men, who, with some pistols and guns and hand grenades are risking their liberty and their lives in what I believe to be a futile attempt to drive from their country the occupying foreign army and win a free and united Ireland. This handful of valiant fellows with their sorry equipment, facing the Army of Britain with its guns and its tanks, has made coups that have astounded the nations. No one of the fabled European undergrounds has ever covered itself with such credit as has this little band of I. R. A. boys. And as with the old I. R. A., which defied and tricked and defeated the nefarious Black-and-Tans, Britain's propagandists and her Orange implements inform the world that the brave boys are "rioters" and "murderers." (It is only just to your readers to state that this underground has, for reasons too complicated to explain in this hasty note, come under the ban of both Dublin Government and Irish hierarchy.)

To come back to where I set out—when I got home from my travels and saw, featured on The Commonweal's cover, "Ireland's Angry Young Men," I tore open the paper to read the praises of Ireland's boldest, bravest, angriest boys—and learned—what?—I learn from my Commonweal that they are exactly what the Orange Kadar and his British Master have been telling the world—"rioters" and "cold-blooded murderers"! ("Murder," by the way, being the use, in the fight against overwhelming odds, of ambush and mine and booby trap—barbarian atrocities that your cloistered correspondent had never known to be perpetrated in any of all wars of the world previously!)

That the estimable Commonweal should, unwittingly, have been used to spread Britain's poison, to mislead its very influential readers, and do moral assassination to the character of boys who are of the finest, cleanest, most valiant and admirable of Ireland's youth, of the youth of any country, leaves me indescribably sorry, shocked, and ashamed.

SEUMAS MACMANUS.

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Maritain on America

REFLECTIONS ON AMERICA. By Jacques Maritain. Scribners. $3.50.

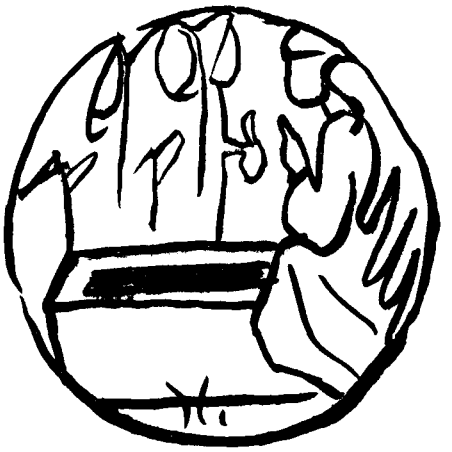
By ANNE FREMANTLE

PIO NONO is said to have advised a visitor to Rome to stay for three days or three years; in either case he would learn all there was to know about the Eternal City. Whatever you do, the Pope warned, do not stay three weeks or three months, for in that case you will only be confused. Visitors to our United States are only too apt to disregard the Pontiff's warning, and after a summer vacation, or a lecture tour, to sound off in the wake of Messrs. Tocqueville and Trollope, of Fanny Burney and Evelyn Waugh. Not so the dean of Catholic philosophers. With an exquisite delicacy of taste and touch, with discretion and rare modesty, he now ventures, for the first time, after a twenty years sojourn in this country, to write and to publish the loveliest of Valentines America has ever received. M. Maritain is not a young man, but his is a young book: *avrileux,* to use a French word, hopeful, grave, compassionate and tender.

But he is a philosopher, and his first concern is Truth, for God is Truth before He is Love, and Pilate's shrugging quiz is the philosopher's quest. M. Maritain's first impression, on arrival here, has been basic and enduring: of a sharp distinction to be made "between the spirit of the American people and the logic of the superimposed structure or ritual of civilization." This distinction, this contrast, he sees as being actually a state of tension, and of hidden conflict. It shows itself everywhere: in the theoretical race equality denied by the laws enforcing segregation; in the apparent materialism that expresses itself in a constant concern with the getting of money, which, once acquired, turns the getter as much into the giver as the spender; in the passionate need to be accepted, to be liked, coupled with a real wish simply to be good. As the natives in New Guinea said (M. Maritain quotes Margaret Mead), "From the American we learned that human beings are irreplaceable and unexpendable, while all material things are replaceable and so expendable."

Because M. Maritain fell in love with America at first sight, he knows America is a moral personality, a moral vocation "quickened, in one way or another, by some spark of the Christian spirit and legacy." And this personality is delivered from history, as no other country ever has been, by being turned entirely toward the future, not toward the past. America was founded, in blood and by battle of course, but not quite to the same extent as other countries, and at least partly by men speaking and men writing. Blood, as Goethe said, is a *ganz merkwurdiges Saft* (a very strange juice), but Mahomet rightly equated the ink of the scholars with the blood of the martyrs as endurable liquids. M. Maritain is delighted with the way the voice of the Founding Fathers still appeals to contemporary Americans, and he is not less delighted with how little Marx's "immense and terrible set of concatenated necessities" which is History binds them. Maritain writes of the American people: "History is, in one sense, behind them. They walk, they march, they gambol ahead of history, as in those big processions with resounding bands and girls in fancy dress, which so often enliven American streets".

Evelyn Waugh said tersely that America's vocation was silence, because it had so great a need of it, but for M. Maritain Americans are "bruised souls." These words, spoken to him by an American many years ago, refer to the wounds and the sorrows of American ancestors, and are related to the fact that the early Americans were people hunted because of their religious convictions, rejected by their own national communities, or of-



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fended and humiliated by distress and poverty. And still they come: the first came to commit themselves wholly to the land of promise open to receive them; their children's success is sown in tears and toil, and "the perpetual arrival of a new first generation of immigrants" and the "tears and sufferings of many unfortunates . . . have been and ceaselessly are, a stream fecundating the soil of the New World and preparing for America's grandeur." For these tears and sufferings are not in vain: on the perfectly human and concrete level, they "are transfigured into optimism and creativity."

But, as St. Francis de Sales said, all virtues except prudence and charity becomes their contrary vices if overindulged in: courage becomes temerity; caution, cowardice; and American virtues are no exception to this general rule. The too great (ideological) modesty of Americans involves a serious risk, "the risk of intellectual isolation, the risk of making American reality, and the greatest human and social achievements of the American people, noncommunicable to other nations." And in an important footnote, M. Maritain adds that in this modesty lurks another peril, that of spreading the notion, originated by Germans, that only specialists have a right to think.

M. Maritain is most interesting, perhaps, in his discussion of the growth of organized labor and the evolution of industry and management: in these he sees America as having already gone beyond capitalism and socialism. He sees the principle of the fecundity of money now definitely superseded by the principle of profit-sharing in a contractual association. But this great, and generally successful experiment in advancing beyond the frontiers and the basic antagonisms of capitalism and socialism, is "enveloped in the fog of a merely experiential approach and mere practical conceptualization, with no universal ideas to communicate. For lack of adequate ideology, your lights cannot be seen" the author tells his beloved hosts. And, pointing out that such lights could be torches towards which mankind would be glad to turn, he comments "I think it is too much modesty."

He sees in the essential classlessness (by which he seems actually to mean *castelessness*) of American society a foretaste of the new régime that will be both personalist and communitarian. But this cannot come until society ministers free of charge to the absolutely basic needs of human life in each one." This quite astonishingly Fabian admission reminds me of one occasion when I told M. Maritain how Bertrand Russell, disapproving my wish to write a book on loyalty, said "Loyalty. Always a bad thing. Presupposes an ethical ambivalence." M. Maritain, putting his head on one side and smiling, said "For once, I think Russell is right." It is this truly Augustinian

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appetite for truth wherever it may be found—Augustine bade us "accept it as though famished"—that makes this small book so great a one: it is a tiny boat, carrying heavy sail, and the wind that moves it is the wisdom of the Spirit, Hagia Sophia.

In Sweet Reason

IN THE UNIVERSITY TRADITION. By Alfred Whitney Griswold. Yale University Press. $3.

By PHILIP SCHARPER

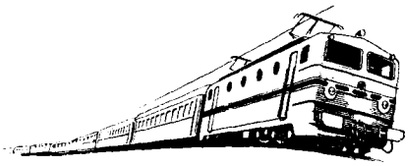
MOST OF the essays which comprise this volume are occasional pieces. The particular occasions — baccalaureate sermons, convocations, reports to alumni— are usually invitations to the ample platitude. President Griswold, with a stout rhetorical conscience, has turned down the invitation in most cases and has tried, with considerable success, to say memorably something worth remembering.

There is, for example, his rather well-known address "on conversation, chiefly academic"; much commented on when delivered at Brown in 1954, it deserves the quasi-permanence of inclusion within a book. There is also a masterful analysis of the history of instrumentalism in education, both Athenian and American, which shows that pragmatic education is as old as liberal education, and historically more congenial to America. John Dewey hoed and reaped, but the seed had been sown several generations before by the emancipation of the Negro, the tides of immigration and the secularization of American culture.

There is, indeed, throughout this slender volume, a centrality of thought and balance of judgment which make Mr. Griswold himself a strong argument in favor of that liberal education which is his major concern. There is, also, a thoroughly admirable tone to Mr. Griswold's observations; he exhibits on every page what St. Francis de Sales, in another connection, called "sweet reasonableness." He is the very model of a modern college president.

That, perhaps, is the main reason why one closes the book with a final feeling of dissatisfaction. The woods are burning, in Willy Loman's phrase, and Smoky the Bear, the picture of sweet reasonableness, is telling us to be sure to break our matches. Our present educational crisis has been years in the making; the chasm at our feet has been opening wider every year, and the best professional educators (of whom Mr. Griswold is one) have been reporting that fact—to the best professional educators and that minority of the American people which had already looked down and seen the chasm.

Perhaps what is needed is less of the sweet reasonableness and more of the galling insouciance which marked some of the proponents of liberal education in the thirties. Robert Hutchins, Mortimer Adler, Stringfellow Barr and Co.



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had much the same educational convictions as does Mr. Griswold, but they yelled out their convictions in loud, raspy voices which shattered the silence of Academe and even carried to the *agora*. Loud voices are badly needed today.

Our culture is increasingly sensate, until even serious plays and books are advertised in terms of prurient appeal. Our educational slums are spreading because the richest nation in history spends less for education than it does for cosmetics. Vice-President Nixon tells the nation's college football coaches that their sport develops character, and not a voice is raised, in irony or indignation, against this tacit endorsement of the commercialized Saturday spectacles which symbolize our educational confusions and misplaced energies.

Desperate times need desperate measures, and desperate measures need desperate men. President Griswold, in these essays, is not a desperate man. In fairness, the occasions did not demand that he be. But one cannot help wishing that between the covers of this book there had been much more bark and an occasional bite, as well as masterful homilies on salvation, addressed to the saved.

Sandburgiana

THE SANDBURG RANGE. By Carl Sandburg. Harcourt. $6.

By JOHN COURNOS

NEITHER a stove nor a shooting gallery, *The Sandburg Range* is a book, awkwardly titled, designed to reveal the scope and diversity of Carl Sandburg's writing talent. He is advertised on the jacket as "renowned as a poet, Lincoln biographer, historian, novelist, troubador, autobiographer, and story teller for children." But can it be said that Sandburg's literary reputation will rest on anything more than his Lincoln opus?

There is Sandburg's considerable reputation as a poet. When *The People, Yes* first appeared in 1936, a

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critic sympathetic to the poet frankly asserted that scarcely a fifth of the volume was poetry in any sense of the term. On the other hand, Willard Thorp, in *A Literary History of the United States,* calls this "one of the great American books," and further declares that a foreigner will find more of America in this book "than in any other book we can give him." The latter statement, true though it may be, does not answer the first critic. To be a great American patriot is not enough; to know the people is not enough. A poet must also, by means of discipline and knowledge communicate to the reader, in a form integral and enduring, something of significance.

Some of the poems in this volume impress me as genuine poems, others as mild postcripts to Walt Whitman, and still others as not poems at all, but random fragments waiting to be beaten into shape. And here is a significant fact: the poet never fails when he comes to the theme of Lincoln: "The Long Shadow of Lincoln: A Litany," read by him at William and Mary College in 1944, is eloquent testimony to this fact.

The Rootabaga stories for children are extremely fanciful, and have a peculiar charm; but I feel that only a child critic can render any acceptable reaction to them.

Of himself Sandburg writes forthrightly, modestly, in a matter-of-fact manner. As one who is interested in people and loves them, he is a good observer; his experiences introduce the reader to aspects of American life learned at first hand. He writes warmly of his famous friends; indeed at times lets his enthusiasm run away with him, as when he speaks of the photographer Steichen in the same breath with Leonardo de Vinci.

Perhaps next to his *Lincoln* his most ambitious if less successful achievement has been *Remembrance Rock,* which he calls a novel—wrongly, I think. It is, in fact, less than a novel, and more than a novel, not only because it attempts to communicate a "message" to the American people—"this swift and furious people . . . the most original, inventive, unpredictable people in the world"—but even more because in it the author seems scarcely interested in Americans as individuals. They are types who, through the crises of four different historical epochs, courageously espoused the American Dream, following faithfully the precepts of the Founders. Like the recurrent *motif* of a four-movement symphony, the "message" is repeated through the four parts of the story which have no organic fictional connection with one another. The reader will not find in it the novelistic merits extolled by the critics who praised it for the wrong things.

So back we come to the Lincoln tomes, which tower like immense oaks above all the variegated shrubbery in the land of Sandburgia. The mind and heart of Sandburg needed the combined inspiration of Lincoln and of the poor people of whom Lincoln said that God must have loved them to have made so many of them. This spirit is scattered through Sandburg's books, but the figure of Lincoln fed the writer with this spirit concentrated in force and provided the human symbol upon which to concentrate his own genius. The life of Lincoln demanded of Sandburg great reserves of patience and of effort. The result is an enduring monument—rambling, often seemingly formless, but like Nature itself, prodigal and diverse, and if the weeds press on the flowers, it is all lost in the grandeur of the whole.

REVIEWERS

Anne Fremantle is a well-known critic, lecturer and writer. Her latest work is *By Grace of Love.*

Philip Scharper, a former editor of The Commonweal, is now an editor of Sheed and Ward.

John Cournos is an anthologist and critic. He has a special interest in Americana.

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